

Reps. Continue Effort to Block Automatic Pay Raise During Tough Economic Times

WASHINGTON - U.S. Reps. Harry Mitchell and Ron Paul late last night introduced H.R. 4255, the Stop the Automatic Pay Raise for Members of Congress in FY2011 Act, to block the automatic pay raise members of Congress are scheduled to receive in Fiscal Year 2011, which begins October 1, 2010.

"With unemployment high and so many families struggling to make ends meet, it is unconscionable to think that Congress is considering giving itself a pay raise," said Mitchell. "Right now we need our focus to be on getting people back to work, shoring up the economy, and keeping our families and communities safe -- not on giving ourselves a raise."

"Turning down our automatic pay increase is the least Congress could do to demonstrate fiscal responsibility and solidarity with our constituents in these tough economic times. Much more needs to be done to reduce the size and expense of government, but passing this legislation would be a start," stated Congressman Paul.

Earlier this year, Mitchell and Paul introduced similar legislation, H.R. 156, which garnered 118 cosponsors, and were successful in blocking the FY 2010 pay raise. As a result, members of Congress did not receive their anticipated raise this year, which has saved taxpayers approximately \$2.5 million. [Source: [The Hill](#), Dec. 17, 2008]

The precise amount of the FY2011 automatic pay raise has yet to be determined. However, the FY2010 raise would have been \$4,700 had Mitchell and Paul not been successful in blocking it and members received a pay raise of \$4,400 in FY2009.

Mitchell and Paul also introduced legislation to block the FY2009 pay raise, which, despite gaining 34 bipartisan cosponsors, did not reach the floor of the House for a vote. Mitchell offered a similar bill in 2007, H.R. 2934, to block the FY2008 pay raise, which attracted 29 co-sponsors. Mitchell was first elected to Congress in 2006.

In 2008 and 2009, when Rep. Mitchell received a pay raise over his objection, he donated those raises to Arizona charities, dividing the donations among 10 local non-profit organizations.

In 1989, Congress approved a process that provides lawmakers with an automatic pay raise every January unless they vote specifically to reject the raise.